



NEWS RELEASE

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USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT ANNOUNCES GRANT FUNDING FOR HOUSING RENOVATION IN ZAPATA COUNTY

ZAPATA, TEXAS, March 8, 2006-- USDA Rural Development Area Director, David Gonzalez, today presented a ceremonial check to Zapata County for a \$75,000 Housing Preservation Grant (HPG). USDA Rural Development Housing Programs are designed to strengthen the economy and infrastructure of rural areas. Through its support of the growth and development of communities, the agency works to improve the quality of life in rural America.

“USDA Rural Development is very pleased to be able to provide housing rehabilitation funding for rural Texans,” said State Director, Bryan Daniel. “It is our goal to ensure rural residents are afforded an opportunity to live in decent housing that meets health and safety standards and provides the benefits of energy efficient features.”

USDA Rural Development funds will be used to assist 10 families with essential home repairs in Zapata County. The repairs will correct health and safety hazards and improve living conditions of the homes. Funds may also be used for structural additions to eliminate overcrowding or to remove health hazards, painting and siding to inhibit deterioration and modifications if necessary to insure handicapped accessibility. Priority will be given to the elderly, large families, and families in structures deemed environmentally substandard.

In Fiscal Year 2005, a total of \$637,982 in Housing Preservation Grants was obligated in Texas. The purpose of the HPG Program is to promote continued economic development in rural communities by making grants to sponsoring organizations for the repair or rehabilitation of low and very-low income housing. Grants are competitive and are made available in areas where there is a concentration of need.

For more information regarding USDA Rural Development Programs, contact the Rio Grande City Local Office at (956) 487-5576, Extension 4, or visit our website at <http://rurdev.usda.gov/tx/>. For further information regarding the HPG application process and other HPG questions you may contact Gayle Ledyard, Rural Housing Program Director, at (254) 742-9765.

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Committed to the future of rural communities.

“USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender.”

To file a complaint of discrimination write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 14th and Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice or TDD).